



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUDICIAL BRANCH**

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**Testimony of Deborah Fuller
Judiciary Committee Public Hearing
April 1, 2011**

**Senate Bill 1234, An Act Concerning Nondisclosure of Residential Addresses of
Certain Public Official and Employees**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony, on behalf of the Judicial Branch, in support of Senate Bill 1234, *An Act Concerning Nondisclosure of Residential Addresses of Certain Public Official and Employees*.

The Judicial Branch supports this bill because it would clarify the extent of the protection afforded by the exemptions to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) that have been granted by the Legislature. Under C.G.S. section 1-217, the residential addresses of several categories of public officials and employees, including judges, municipal and state police officers, Department of Correction employees, Public Defenders, Judicial Branch employees and others, are not currently disclosable. This proposal would clarify that those residential addresses are not disclosable under any provision of the general statutes. This is necessary in order to ensure that the protection granted by those exemptions is meaningful.

Currently, several related cases are pending before the Supreme Court because the Freedom of Information Commission (FOIC) has determined that the home addresses of public officials whose addresses are protected under the existing statute are not protected when the request is for the list of registered motor vehicles used to compile personal property tax lists. These cases include appeals from FOIC decisions by the Judicial Branch, the Department of Correction, the Department of Public Safety, and a state employee union.

The FOIC's determination that existing protections do not apply to requests made this way would create a major hole in the protection that the current statute provides for classes of persons whose position or employment subjects them to an elevated risk of threats, danger and violence by allowing towns to disclose their residential addresses to anyone who requests them. State judges and Judicial Branch employees are protected by the current statute in recognition of the fact that the work they do can subject them to an increased threat of danger. This is not mere speculation – there have been numerous instances where judges and Judicial Branch employees have been subjected to threats of violence and some instances of actual violence. Because there is no evidence that these threats are diminishing, we believe that there is a continuing need to protect our judges and employees from dangers arising out of their employment.

We urge the Committee to act favorably on this proposal.